

Table 8—Demographic characteristics of part-time (less than 35 hours per week) and full-time hired farmworkers and all wage and salary workers, 1996

Characteristics	Annual averages							
	Hired farmworkers				All wage and salary workers			
	Part-time		Full-time		Part-time		Full-time	
	Thousands	Percent	Thousands	Percent	Thousands	Percent	Thousands	Percent
Total	202	100	703	100	21,193	100	90,949	100
Gender:								
Male	142	70.5	620	88.2	6,617	31.2	51,913	57.1
Female	60	29.5	83	11.8	14,576	68.8	39,036	42.9
Racial/ethnic:								
White	167	82.6	366	52.1	16,649	78.6	67,512	74.2
Hispanic	26	12.9	300	42.7	1,725	8.1	9,084	10.0
Black and other	9	4.5	37	5.3	2,819	13.3	14,353	15.8
Age (years):								
Less than 20	46	30.2	56	7.9	4,809	22.7	1,944	2.1
20-24	29	19.3	79	11.2	3,356	15.8	8,371	9.2
25-34	30	19.7	201	28.6	3,761	17.7	25,760	28.3
35-44	18	11.9	180	25.6	3,776	17.8	26,782	29.4
45-54	10	6.5	105	14.9	2,407	11.4	19,175	21.1
55 and older	18	12.4	82	11.7	3,083	14.5	8,917	9.8
Median age	20		35		31		38	
Marital status:								
Married	60	29.7	450	63.9	9,458	44.6	55,311	60.8
Widowed, divorced, or separated	14	6.7	60	8.6	2,345	11.1	13,872	15.3
Never married	128	63.6	194	27.5	9,390	44.3	21,766	23.9
Schooling completed: ¹								
0-4 years	14	6.9	105	15.0	145	0.7	673	0.7
5-8 years	30	15.0	150	21.3	695	3.3	2,496	2.7
9-11 years	88	43.4	131	18.6	4,404	20.7	6,669	7.3
12 years	38	19.1	192	27.2	5,861	27.7	30,401	33.4
13 years or more	32	15.6	126	17.9	10,088	47.6	50,710	55.8

¹ Educational attainment levels, beginning January 1992, were revised to reflect degrees or diplomas received rather than years of school completed. Therefore, to be included under "12 years of education completed," a diploma, GED, or equivalent degree must have been granted.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Current Population Survey earnings microdata file.

Part- and Full-Time Workers

About 22 percent (202,000) of hired farmworkers and about 19 percent (21,193,000) of all wage and salary workers were employed part time (less than 35 hours per week) in 1996 (table 8).⁶ Part-time hired farmworkers were more likely than full-time hired farmworkers to be female, white, younger (24 years and under), and never married (table 8). The percentage of full-time hired farmworkers that had completed either less than 5 years of education or a total of 12 years of education was significantly larger than the percentages of part-time hired farmworkers with the same education levels. A significantly larger percentage of part-time than full-time hired farmworkers completed 9 to 11 years of education.

Survey enumerators asked part-time workers whether or not they worked part time voluntarily. These choices were classified either as noneconomic if they voluntarily worked part time or as economic if they involuntarily worked part time.⁷

The largest percentage of both part-time hired farmworkers and part-time wage and salary workers gave “school/training” and “other family/personal obligations” as the major noneconomic reason for working part time (table 9). Significantly more hired farmworkers gave “school/training” as the reason, not surprising since a greater share of them are less than 20 years old. The seasonal nature of farmwork frequently accommodates the irregular employment needs of students.

Among part-time workers who worked part time for economic reasons, most of the hired farmworkers gave “slack work/business conditions” as the reason for working part time, whereas most of the wage and salary workers gave “could only find part-time work” as the reason for working part time (table 10). Significantly more part-time wage and salary workers than hired farmworkers gave “could only find part-time work” and “other family/personal obligations” as reasons for working part time when they wanted full-time work.

⁶ Part-time and full-time distinctions do not imply seasonality, since the data do not measure the number of weeks worked during the year.

⁷ Individuals who usually work part time must also indicate that they want and are available to work full time to be classified as part time for economic reasons.

Table 9—Reasons why part-time workers want to work part time, 1996

Reasons	Annual averages	
	Hired farmworkers	All wage and salary workers
	<i>Thousands</i>	
Total workers ¹	123	13,214
	<i>Percent</i>	
Child care problems	2.9	4.4
Other family/personal obligations	11.4	28.1
Health/medical limitations	4.6	3.4
School/training	63.1	43.7
Retired/Social Security limit on earnings	9.6	10.2
Full-time workweek less than 35 hours	2.4	2.8
Other	6.0	7.3

¹ Those working part time by choice.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Current Population Survey earnings microdata file.

Table 10—Reasons why workers who want to work full time are working part time, 1996

Reasons	Annual averages	
	Hired farmworkers	All wage and salary workers
	<i>Thousands</i>	
Total workers	47	4,402
	<i>Percent</i>	
Slack work/business conditions	41.3	26.2
Could only find part-time work	18.7	40.1
Seasonal work	9.3	0.9
Child care problems	4.6	2.2
Other family/personal obligations	1.6	6.9
Health/medical limitations	1.1	2.2
School/training	17.9	10.9
Retired/Social Security limit on earnings	0.3	0.5
Full-time workweek is less than 35 hours	NA	3.7
Other	5.3	6.4

NA=Not available.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Current Population Survey earnings microdata file.